



Plum Class News

Autumn 1

Welcome to the first Plum Class newsletter! We hope you have had a fantastic summer with your families and are ready for the new school year ahead. We would also like to offer a warm welcome to those families who are new to our school and will be enjoying their first school year here with us in Plum class. The children have already adapted to life in Reception here at Swansfield amazingly well – we are very proud of their courage – change can be so scary (for us as parents also!) but we can confirm that Plum Class this year are a determined bunch! Although the mornings can be tricky for our children, as separation from parents has had to be prompt and independent, the children have shown true emotional resilience – they seem to be finding the separation easier than us parents! If your child is finding it difficult, it often works better if drop off is swift and you leave the children with us at the door although the choice is always yours. Life in Plum class is quickly settling and the children are forming friendships and gaining in confidence daily – it is wonderful to see.

We hope that you find the information detailed in this letter a useful guide to our day in school. If you haven't already done so, please take time looking at the [Swansfield Park website](#), it is a great way of finding out information. More specifically, if you go on to **Plum Class in 'class pages'**, you will find all the learning that has taken place over the past week. This is where we will share photos and captions with all of the wonderful things we have been up to on a weekly basis. Please don't hesitate to email us for any clarification, or if you have a more pressing matter, we can arrange a chat after school when the other children have been collected.

During this half term, in everything we do, we will be teaching the essential personal, social and emotional skills needed to keep our classroom a happy and thriving place to spend our days.

Reminders

Just a few polite reminders...

- Please could we ask that the children bring in a **named** book bag and a **named** water bottle to school every day!
- Please remember that water bottles should only contain water and not juice, fizzy pop etc.

-On Friday evenings we will upload our weekly blog onto our class page on the Swansfield Park School website – please visit this to find out all of the fun things we have been learning throughout the week and to see pictures of our learning in action. You may want to sit with your child and discuss what they were learning to do in the picture. **If you have not already done so, please could you submit a photograph consent to Reception so that we are able to share photos of your child on our blog.**

Read, Write, Inc

All children in Plum Class have begun their RWI learning journey this week. In RWI your children are learning and using the letter sounds that will unlock the door to reading and writing. Over time, the children will be taught in groups to ensure they are getting the support they need. These groups may also change to include other teachers across school as we continue on our RWI journey. Please support your child as much as you can by accessing the home learning videos that we send home. We will send home weekly practise writing sheets and it will really benefit your child if you can help them to complete these for short bursts over the weekend.

Mathematics

In Reception, we follow Whiterose and Mastering Number to develop a strong foundation in number sense for our children. Mathematics will be taught mainly through practical activities and games with lots of opportunity for taking our learning outdoors. This half term we will be spending the first few weeks getting the children used to accessing our maths provision and spending lots of time enjoying counting songs and games to strengthen their 1:1 counting correspondence. We will then move on to sorting objects and sets that are similar and different as well as comparing sets and sorting them into collections according to different criteria based on more/fewer, size, mass and capacity. We will also explore pattern during this half term to help prepare us for working with numerals next term. The emphasis in EYFS is to be able to understand numbers properly, by using them in a real life context, rather than being able to count up to 'big numbers'.

The World

During this half term our main topics will be *myself*, *My World and Feeling Fine*, *Autumn and Harvest*. The 'Myself' topic will be getting to know the children, especially their interests. It's a good opportunity for us to understand their likes and dislikes. Alongside this, we really want the children to enjoy coming to school and for them to be happy whilst they settle in to a new environment with new rules and routines. We will be developing the children's understanding of the past by looking back at the changes we can see in pictures of them as babies to how they look now. As the year goes on, we will add to our class timeline display, adding in key memorable moments in time such as Christmas, allowing the children time to reflect back on continuing changes.

Moving on from this, we will start to look at the seasonal changes we can see in our outdoor school environment, exploring these changes from summer – Autumn using our senses. This will lead nicely into exploring Harvest, finding out about crops that are gathered and the machinery used in this process.

Creative Work

Singing is a daily occurrence in Plum class and we will be learning many new topic themed songs as well as enjoying old favourites! We follow the Charranga music scheme and this term we are going to be working with a music specialist developing our skills of singing in a group and following the melody.

Alongside our topic work, there will be plenty of opportunities for our children to show off their creative side. Learning activities will include observational painting, modelling our own Combine Harvesters and storytelling alongside any of the Autumnal avenues the children wish to explore. There will be plenty of opportunities for the children to begin to choose colour for purpose during their painting and experiment using a variety of media such as chalk, pastels, collage, etc.

The children will also take part in weekly Drawing Club sessions where they are able to develop their drawing skills and communicate their feelings and ideas whilst developing and strengthening their fine motor muscles.

Of course, there will be plenty of creative materials out every day as part of our continuous provision and children will be free to follow their own interests and develop their own creations.

RE

In our RE learning this half term, the focus will be 'Being special: where do we belong?' Children will have the opportunity to explore people who are special in their lives e.g. families and friends. Children will share the activities they do with their families at home, talking about what makes them feel special and part of a group, what things can they do better together than on their own, as well as considering role models and making connections from personal experiences. Children will focus on 'Christians' this half term and will explore what 'baptism' is and find out about who Jesus was. They will also find out what happens when a baby is welcomed into a religion other than Christianity.

We will be consolidating our learning by asking each other lots of questions, as our enquiry based learning lends itself perfectly to this.

PHSE

This half term our focus will be on ensuring our children feel settled, safe and happy in Plum Class so there will be daily opportunities for discussions about our feelings and we have a daily feelings check in station just outside the classroom (on display) based on the story *The colour monster*. Children will have weekly Jigsaw sessions focusing on the topic "Being me in my world" where they will be many opportunities to share their ideas about feelings and their rights and responsibilities

The Physical Stuff and The Outside Environment

In Reception, our children have teacher led PE lessons on Thursday mornings where we will work on developing our listening skills, our turn taking and coordination as we move, throw and climb. **Please send your child to school in a white t-shirt, purple shorts or plain black jogging bottoms and plain white or black trainers on Thursdays.**

Plum class garden also provides many avenues through which children will utilise their whole bodies; climbing and balancing across wooden planks on our tyres, digging in Autumn bulbs, regularly sweeping our extremely leafy garden and dancing, hula hooping, stilting and using up our abundance of energy! We will also be engaging in regular morning exercise through song and dance and with yoga sessions in the afternoons.

For our children to become super writers we have a dedicated finger gym station where there are daily challenges concentrating on focused fine motor activities such as; scissor work, threading and manipulation, using tweezers etc. This ensured that our fingers get a good work out to help develop those important fine motor muscles!

We go outside in all weathers and we have the appropriate suits for the children to wear, although a spare set of clothes or waterproofs is always appreciated (in case they do get wet or muddy). **Every child in Plum Class MUST have a pair of wellies in school.**

When the weather begins to turn cold, could you please ensure that your child has a coat, hat, scarf and preferably a pair of mittens rather than gloves. It is incredibly helpful to us if all clothing, shoes and wellies are named!

School360 Learning Journals

The online journal is our way of recording your child's development and journey from Nursery through to the end of their Reception year. It includes photographs and observations of significant moments during their time with us, which link to the Early Years Curriculum that we follow. It would be extremely helpful if you could occasionally upload any 'wow' developmental moments at home so that we are able to see learning opportunities in your child's home context as well as at school. You will notice this year that there will be less observations throughout the year. In Reception a lot of our learning is recorded in our work books, so we will only upload observations that we feel are developmentally significant or to share with you special moments in Plum Class.

We look forward to an exciting year in Reception with your children. Together, we can ensure that Plum class children enjoy a successful year where they develop a real love for school and learning!

Remember we are always here to answer any questions, offer any support or listen to any concerns. You can catch Mrs Hammond or myself in the morning or at home time or email me at...

Annabel.freeman@swansfield.northumberland.sch.uk

